Sub A1

Abstract of the Disclosure

Techniques make surfing global computer networks, such as the Internet World Wide Web, more satisfying and/or pleasurable. A "Virtual World" is simulated which graphically and functionally restores a user's sense of proximity, or distance, while surfing on the Web. A visitor to this Virtual World is presented with the ability to traverse a two- or three-dimensional geographic terrain. The visitor' icon is moved along the graphic display in the direction of various destinations representing by appropriate graphic designations, with subsequent pages being cached in the preferred embodiment so that subsequent pages are instantly displayed, eliminating the annoying delay often associated with the choice of a subsequent page of a web site. Metrics, including Common Metrics and Customized Metrics, are used to enhance user interactions. A Common Metric is when the geographic terrain on which the various visitors are located is common to all, so that one person can approach the other person by reducing the distance between the two. Customized Metrics, based upon user profiles or interaction histories, are attached to a person, indicating how their "view" of the Virtual World should be constructed. In addition to dedicated Web sites, the invention is applicable to portals or front ends of web sites wherein, for example, an initial or early screen provides a user or visitor with a variety of choices, each connected with one or more additional screens or Web site pages. Regardless of implementation, the invention improves a user's experience during visiting a Web site in several ways, including e-commerce sites wherein each visitor is be assigned an icon that can be moved between

A1 destinations graphically represented on the site display at a visually perceptible rate, using virtual currency to purchase goods or services.